

Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor



John D. Porcari, Secretary
Neil J. Pedersen, Administrator

Maryland Department of Transportation

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Eric Marabello, Chief
Highway Design Division

ATTN: Mr. Moreshwar Kulkarni
Project Manager

FROM: Mr. Donald H. Sparklin
Division Chief
Environmental Planning Division

DATE: April 6, 2009

RE: FMIS #PG494B21
MD 5 @ I-95/I-495 Metro Access Study
Final Review - Phase 2

The following information verifies that the current design plan, when compared to that for which a Categorical Exclusion (CE) was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) will not result in significantly different environmental impacts.

- A. **Date CE/LA was approved by FHWA:**
CE/Location Approval: October 5, 2000
Final Review Reevaluation Phase 1: June 9, 2005
Redline Reevaluation Phase 1: May 19, 2008
- B. **Are the proposed improvements different than those approved for the CE?**
 X Yes No. Explain

This reevaluation compares the design changes shown on the final review plans for Phase 2 of the MD 5@ I-95/I-495 Metro Access study with the design of selected alternate 3B, which received Location Approval as a CE (2000). The original project included improvements to the I-95/I-495 ramps and improved access to the Branch Avenue Metro Station. After the Preliminary Investigation (PI) the I-95/I-495 ramp improvement portion of the project was broken out and became Phase 1. Phase 2 included a new roadway to the Branch Avenue Metro Station perpendicular to southbound MD 5 and above the two depressed northbound MD 5 travel lanes (depressed from Auth Road to Auth Way). The selected alternate minimized

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maintenance of traffic issues by detouring traffic onto the new median while northbound MD 5 is constructed. Also, the new Metro Access Road connector roadway would intersect Auth Place and continue to the Branch Avenue Metro Station. Phase 2 also includes construction of the pedestrian bridge across MD 5, and minor refinements to Auth Way, Auth Road, and Auth Place as described below.

The changes to the current design for Phase 2 reflect input from Prince George's County, who will assume ownership of the Metro Access Road upon completion of construction, and refinements to the hydraulic design. The Metro Access Road design now includes lighting, additional sidewalk on both sides of the roadway, and widening along its length to accommodate inclusion of a 4-14 feet grassed median. A 400-foot section of Metro Access Road between the south entrance of the park and ride lot for the Branch Avenue Metro Station and Old Soper Road will be widened by 20 feet, to improve the truck turn radii, and sidewalk added to the westbound side. To reduce costs, the stormwater management pond at the northeast quadrant of Metro Access Road and Auth Place will be removed, and the hydraulic load added to the enlarged and deepened stormwater management pond in the southwest quadrant. A 12-foot wide by 850-foot long maintenance access road will be added to the pond location.

Additional minor refinements to the design include adding sidewalk, drainage pipe, and resurfacing within the project limits. A sidewalk will be added on the southbound side of Auth Place between Metro Access Road and Auth Road. A 250-foot drainage pipe extension will be added to Auth Place, north of Auth Way. Pavement from the Ford Company parking lot is being removed in both the northeast and southeast quadrant of the Auth Place and Metro Access Road intersection due to the alignment of the new Metro Access Road. Finally, the project limits have been extended an additional 20 feet on Auth Way, 265 feet on Metro Access Road, and 130 feet on Auth Road for resurfacing. With the exception of the resurfacing, all of these design changes occur within the original footprint of the MD 5 study area.

C. **Are the environmental impacts different?** ____ Yes ____ ☒ No. Explain.

Right-of-way will be required from 23 properties in Phase 2. Some properties will be purchased in easements and fee simple impacts. The right-of-way impacts include three perpetual easements, five revertible easements, 19 fee simple acquisitions, and 20 temporary easements to accommodate utilities relocations, roadway expansion and sidewalks for a total of 4.29 acres.

A Joint State and Federal Application for Alteration of Any Floodplains, Waterway, Tidal or Nontidal Wetland in Maryland was obtained for the Phase 1 and 2 impacts (Permit No. 04-NT-0524/200561599). Permanent impacts associated with the construction of Phase 2 include 17 linear feet of waters of the U.S. (WUS), 257 square feet of non-tidal wetland impacts, and 2,353 square feet of non-tidal wetland buffer impacts. Temporary impacts for

Phase 2 include 10 linear feet of WUS, 110 square feet of non-tidal wetland, and 505 square feet of non-tidal wetland buffer. There are no impacts to the 100-year floodplain of Henson Creek. Since the modified stormwater management facility remained within the PI limits of disturbance, no additional coordination with the Maryland Historical Trust is required.

The initial site assessment stated that Phase 2 of this work could impact three underground storage tanks (USTs) and a potential historic UST at 4801 Auth Place (Metro Access Rd), a domestic well and pole mounted electrical transformer. These USTs have been removed, the domestic well closed, and the adjacent surface dump cleaned-up. The transformer and pole was removed by PEPCO. The house on this property was demolished.

An air quality study for particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) was completed and was reviewed by FHWA, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. These agencies concurred that the project was not of air quality concern. The PM_{2.5} air quality study was posted for public comment on the SHA project webpage from November 26-December 10, 2008. No comments were received.

D. **Are there changes in the project surroundings (new development, etc.)?**
_____ Yes X No. Explain.

Since Location Approval for Phase 1 in 2000, no additional unplanned development has occurred within the project area. The character of the surrounding area remains consistent with Prince George's County Master Plan for the area. The Branch Avenue Metro Station opened in January 2001. SHA is aware of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority plan for mixed use Transit Oriented Development at the Branch Avenue Metro Station; these plans have not yet been developed.

E. **Is the CE classification still valid?** X Yes _____ No. **If no, what additional or supplemental documentation is required?**

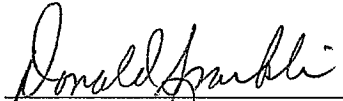
F. **Are the commitments shown on the plans?** X Yes _____ No. **Identify commitments including those related to engineering.**

In addition to a pedestrian bridge, reflecting a commitment made during Project Planning, reforestation, erosion and sediment control, and stormwater management are shown on the current plans and will be approved by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the

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MDE, respectively. Noise walls were determined not to be reasonable or feasible because of the predominantly commercial nature of the study area, as well as the fact that existing traffic noise on surrounding roadways (MD 5, I-95/I-495 and/or Auth Road) are the primary generators of traffic noise in the study area.

Concur:


Donald H. Sparklin
Division Chief
Environmental Planning Division

Date: 4/6/09

cc: Ms. Barbara Allera-Bohlen, SHA-EPD
Ms. Karen Arnold, SHA-EPLD
Mr. Phillip Bello, FHWA-DelMar
Ms. Allison Grooms, SHA-EPLD
Mr. Gary Gray, SHA-OFIT
Mr. Joseph Kresslein, SHA-EPLD
Mr. Darrell Mobley, District 3